

FY97 Evaluations

Agriculture and the Environment: Farmers Need Simple Technologies, Secure Tenure, Fast Payback (PN-ABY-230)

Land degradation looms as a global problem. Between 1975 and the year 2000 the world will have lost 22 percent of its high-potential agricultural land, forcing farmers to expand onto lands that are less productive and more fragile. During the 1980s, USAID spent \$645 million on sustainable agriculture programs that introduced appropriate conservation technologies aimed at increasing agricultural production and reducing soil erosion in developing countries. This report examines program efforts in five of these countries: the Gambia, Jamaica, Mali, Nepal, and the Philippines. In each country, the new technologies, which included terracing, tree-planting, and construction of erosion barriers, increased agricultural production, improved livelihoods and social security, prevented and reduced soil loss, and restored previously uncultivable land to farming. The technologies, which work well and are easy to learn, can be successfully extended to other areas with similar environmental problems and agroclimatic conditions. However, improved technologies are of little lasting value without the institutions necessary to sustain and promote them. Therein lies the weak link in these programs. Inadequate institutions, particularly local ones, jeopardize the long-term sustainability of the farming practices introduced. This is an area

USAID should target for improvement if the very real strides it has made in soil and water conservation are to continue into the next century.

USAID's Population and Family Planning Program: A Synthesis of Six Country Case Studies (PN-ABY-234)

This retrospective study analyzes USAID contributions to family planning (FP) programs in six countries—Ghana, Honduras, Kenya, Pakistan, the Philippines, and Tunisia—and identifies lessons to improve program effectiveness and impact.

According to the report, FP programs have had a positive impact on fertility, health, and the social sectors in Honduras, Kenya, the Philippines, and Tunisia. In general, they have also become more financially efficient over time, although neither USAID nor the six countries have given sustained attention to this issue. USAID contributions to these successes included the following: 1) In each country, including Pakistan and Ghana, where demand for FP was relatively low, USAID-supported interventions increased the use of contraceptives substantially. 2) USAID was the principal FP donor in each country, contributing 40 percent–60 percent of all FP resources over a 20-year period. 3) The most frequently used modern contraceptive methods were those strongly supported by USAID, principally female sterilization, pills, and IUDs, which accounted

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for 92–96 percent of the modern methods used in three of the study countries. 4) The programs in Honduras, Kenya, the Philippines, and Tunisia trained more physicians and health service providers, made modern and effective contraceptives more accessible and available to the majority of the populace, established more delivery channels, and educated more couples than did those in the Philippines and Ghana. They also were more likely to respond to clients' needs by providing contraceptives and services more suited to or demanded by the populace. USAID support made many of these activities possible. While no demographic or health effects could be measured in Pakistan, USAID helped build the institutional capacity that is a precursor to fertility decline.

In all six countries, USAID supported the first steps toward making FP programs financially sustainable. Some activities shifted public sector costs to the private sector; others tested various cost-recovery strategies. USAID's work helped mobilize an international consensus favoring greater reliance on private sector service delivery. While none of the six FP programs is financially self-sufficient, there is evidence of progress toward sustainability in the countries where USAID took serious steps to encourage it. In addition, savings outweighed costs in four countries, by a large margin in the Philippines and Tunisia, to a substantially lesser degree in Kenya and Pakistan. (Includes bibliography.)

Democratic Local Governance in the Philippines: Tradition Hinders Transition (PN–ABY–235)

Although the Philippines has made major progress toward more autonomous and accountable local government by enacting the Local Government Code in 1991, traditional political values and behavior still hold the country back from full-scale democratic local governance. Too many local bosses build power bases through relationships based on favors (often reinforced by threats). Local political party organizations are fairly weak, and local bosses in many cases are loath to grant civil society organizations or citizens the roles carved out for them in the Local Government Code. Thus concludes this evaluation, which reviews USAID's long history of support for democratization in the Philippines. In the 1970s, for instance, the Agency sponsored a trip to the United States for mayors and other local officials (including the principal author of the Local Government Code) to receive training in public administration. Over the past 15 years, USAID has given more than \$78 million to NGOs and people's organizations to support their role as agents of democratic change and reform. Since 1992, the Agency has supported civil society directly, with \$15.1 million to help fisherfolk, urban poor, and indigenous peoples form coalitions. Through the Local Development Assistance Project

(1990–95), USAID provided \$50 million to help decentralize government functions, increase local governments' authority and resources, and broaden citizen participation. In 1995, the Agency began the Governance and Local Democracy project, to which USAID has already committed \$20 million to support development through decentralized governance.

These programs have had a visible impact on the progress of democratic local governance in the Philippines. However, the country still faces the formidable barriers of patronage-style politics, electoral fraud, exclusion of civil society, weak local party organizations, and citizens' lack of knowledge about democratic rights and responsibilities.

Lessons learned from USAID's experience with democratic local governance in the Philippines include the following:

- 1) It is important to build an understanding of democratic processes and develop tools for implementing democracy, even if it means having to wait for the right time to pursue related reforms.
- 2) Political will is essential at both the national and local levels.
- 3) Civil society organizations can fill the void when local political parties aren't strong enough to ensure citizen participation and government accountability.
- 4) Donors need to be flexible and anticipate changing circumstances.
- 5) Promoting democratic principles and attitudes is essential but is often ignored in the traditional emphasis on improving local government administration and service delivery.

Food Aid in Ghana: An Elusive Road to Self- Reliance (PN-ABY-237)

From 1965 through 1994, U.S. food aid to Ghana under PL 480 totaled nearly \$340 million, more than 50 percent of all the food aid received by that country. This report assesses the impact of that aid. All PL 480 food aid to Ghana has been provided as a part of a much larger U.S. policy reform assistance package, which, in turn, was part of a much larger multidonor package. Either the whole package worked or failed. The package delivered from 1966 through 1972 primarily failed; though Ghana launched a series of economic reforms and received a large amount of PL 480 assistance during this period, a political coup prevented the reforms from taking hold and subsequent reforms planned for 1979–83 fell victim to broken government promises.

However, during the last dozen years or so, USAID's food aid package to Ghana has largely succeeded. Since 1983, assistance has led to the privatization of government agricultural marketing, eliminated the fertilizer subsidy, and encouraged nontraditional agricultural exports. In addition, thanks to the economic reforms supported by food aid, the GDP increased during the period 1983–93 at an average rate of 5 percent, one of the longest and highest growth rates in all of Africa. Moreover, the share of those living in poverty fell from 37 percent in 1988 to 31 percent in 1992, and nontraditional agricultural exports, which help primarily the rural poor, increased from \$2 million in 1984 to \$160 million in 1995.

Assistance provided during this later period included Title II feeding programs aimed at those most at risk (pregnant and lactating mothers, malnourished infants and children, and those living in drought areas). These programs have clearly achieved results. Each year, Title II fed over 200,000 hungry Ghanaians, fulfilling the program's specified goal. Some Title II and III projects have addressed specific food and development problems, including food-for-work projects and projects in which food was sold to generate local currency to fund development projects. These were also found to be effective; those suffering from malnutrition were fed, schools and roads were built, village-based microenterprises were developed, and new economic opportunities were created. On the down side, these projects reached only 5 percent of those in need. Moreover, the underlying economic, political, social, and environmental factors that caused food insecurity still exist—a high population growth rate, low growth in agricultural productivity, low per capita income, and a significant proportion of the population living in extreme poverty.

In sum, despite the overall success of PL 480 food aid to Ghana in the last decade or so, a large part of the country's population, 31 percent, still suffers from malnutrition, a problem in which Ghana still ranks near the worst among sub-Saharan countries. The rural poor in the northern half of the country, for example, are as poor as any in Africa, and there is disquieting evidence that the urban poor, even in the largest cities of the south, are becoming poorer.

Lessons learned are as follows: 1) Title I and Title III food aid is a highly flexible development tool in support of policy reforms. 2) Food aid commodities that do not compete with domestic crops do not create a disincentive to local production. 3) Food aid can create a dependency or preference for an imported commodity, such as wheat. 4) Title II feeding programs are a social "safety net" or "holding action" temporarily helping beneficiaries. 5) More study is needed of the relative importance of factors causing food deficits in highly food-insecure recipient countries. 6) Increased Title II monetization and the increased availability of local currency resources from Title III have significantly boosted the ability of NGOs to increase the impact of development projects.

Democratic Local Governance in Ukraine (PN-ABY-238)

While Ukraine's 1996 Constitution gives local government the right to resolve local matters independently, the legal framework to implement this right is missing, and the structure and operations of government remain as they were before independence. Through its Municipal Finance and Management Project, USAID is working to bolster democratic local governance in Ukraine, supporting efforts to increase the effectiveness, accountability, and openness of local governments, and boost citizen involvement in three pilot cities and to replicate these accomplishments in other Ukrainian cities. USAID also supports democratic local governance through

programs to bring about private ownership of housing units and link national housing policy with local privatization demonstration projects. In addition, the Agency supports PVOs working to increase citizen participation and input in local government.

Despite daunting obstacles, signs of emerging democratic local governance in Ukraine are visible. Mayors of the pilot cities in the Municipal Finance and Management project have begun to involve the citizenry in developing the municipal budget and are actively seeking their input on other local government matters. In these same cities, local governments have become more open and accountable, while improving delivery of essential municipal services. Individuals are also beginning to get involved politically at the local level, organizing to improve housing, challenge business interests, and help others for whom the government no longer provides.

USAID's experience with democratic local governance in Ukraine teaches the following lessons: 1) Building democracy can and should be included in efforts to strengthen traditional areas of local government, such as public administration and service delivery. 2) Donors need to do more to link democracy and governance programming with other areas of development activity. 3) Donor assistance should be coordinated and comprehensive, including a viable legal framework, enhanced local government capacity, and increased citizen involvement. 4) Donors need to shore up resolve at the national level to create and sustain the necessary enabling environment. 5) Advocacy organizations are

needed at the national level to represent the interests of local governments. 6) USAID should support valid alternative models of democratic local governance. 7) Study tours in the United States are valuable because they take visiting local government officials beyond abstract notions and give them concrete examples to follow or adapt. 8) Onsite resident advisers can boost a project's overall success because of their sustained, hands-on involvement.

Food Aid in Ethiopia (PN-ABY-241)

Since 1956, the United States has provided Ethiopia, mainly via the Title II program, with \$773 million in food aid. The sum accounts for 28 percent of all food aid provided the East African country over the past 40 years. This report evaluates the economic, social, and political effects of this aid and identifies its principal beneficiaries.

The impact of U.S. food aid to Ethiopia has varied over time. During the reign of Emperor Haile Selassie (1930–74), assistance was small, adding on average less than 2 percent to the country's foreign exchange earnings. But in late 1973, in response to a famine, USAID increased its allocation of Title II resources from \$1 million to nearly \$14 million. Though thousands of lives were saved, at least 100,000 were lost. Food insecurity eroded the stability of Haile Selassie's regime, but it would be difficult to prove that U.S. food aid had any significant political impact. Whether earlier introduction of famine relief could have helped save or prolong the regime is uncertain.

During Mengistu's Marxist-style regime (1974–91), food aid added somewhat more to the country's foreign exchange resources but because of the political and economic environment did not contribute to sustainable economic growth. The period 1982–92 saw famine and civil strife, and though malnutrition rates worsened, food aid most likely deflected even higher rates. During 1984–86, U.S. food aid, provided mostly through PVOs, probably saved millions of lives. However, for this period, food aid was used by both the government and (through an across-border program) the various rebel factions, perhaps helping to prolong the conflict.

For the period 1992–95, after the Mengistu regime was replaced by a transitional government, U.S. food aid accounted for 34 percent of the country's foreign exchange resources. The transfer of agricultural commodities in that period helped jump-start Ethiopia's productive sectors, released money to support other development activities, and helped build the emergency food security reserve and the country's capacity to respond to a 1994 drought. Food assistance also provided a basis for policy dialog on economic liberalization and food security. Over the past four years, the nutritional status of children participating in food-assisted maternal and child health (MCH) programs has improved; food rations may have contributed indirectly to this change by motivating mothers to attend MCH activities (counseling, growth monitoring, and nutrition and health education).

Lessons learned from the evaluation are that food aid can 1) help a country stabilize its economy and provide a basis for policy dialog on issues critical

to food security; 2) unintentionally prolong civil conflict, even when the sole purpose of the aid is humanitarian relief; 3) indirectly contribute to improving children's nutritional status by stimulating mothers' participation in MCH programs; and 4) be an important vehicle for supporting growth strategies and public resource transfers that differentially benefit lower-income groups. (Author abstract, modified.)

Food Aid in Bangladesh: A Gradual Shift From Relief To Reform (PN-ABY-242)

The PL 480 program in Bangladesh, the second largest in the Agency, has been the country's largest source of food aid since its independence from Pakistan, providing over \$2.3 billion of food from 1972 through 1994, about 41 percent of the total amount of food that Bangladesh received in that period. Of this amount, 71 percent was program food aid (mainly Title III); much of the rest was project food aid (Title II) that supported what grew to become one of the largest food-for-work (FFW) efforts in the world. This report assesses the economic, political, and social effects of the program and identifies its beneficiaries.

The multiyear Title III program has focused on promoting food security through policy reform. Specific reforms have included directing the country's food distribution system more closely toward the poor and providing production incentives to farmers by stabilizing food price fluctuations within a relatively narrow range. Of the Title II FFW programs, road construction has been the mainstay.

The impact of this assistance has been substantial. Since the mid-1980s, the feared food grain gap has diminished, thanks in part to the policy reforms supported by the program and first-class monitoring by USAID and the World Bank. Equally important, food aid represented a significant resource for a country suffering severe shortages in virtually all resources. PL 480 was especially critical from independence in 1971 to 1987, when it equaled more than 10 percent of the country's export earnings.

U.S. food aid also contributed to the sharp decline, from 92 percent in 1974 to 48 percent in 1992, in the incidence of poverty in Bangladesh. The program has provided seasonal employment to landless laborers under a CARE-administered FFW program; developed much of the country's rural roads network, thereby increasing both agricultural and off-farm incomes as well as access to family planning and health services and primary schools; and financed agricultural research that contributed to major productivity gains in agriculture and a 47 percent reduction in real rice prices from 1975 to 1994. Food aid has also improved food consumption, though it is difficult to demonstrate any significant impact on children's nutritional status. Finally, the program has clearly benefited the poor by supporting reforms that redirected subsidized public food distribution to them, by implementing FFW efforts in relatively poor geographic regions, and by supplying a food commodity—wheat—that tends to be bought by the poor rather than by the rich.

The Bangladesh experience offers several important lessons. It demonstrates that food aid can provide the basis for policy dialog on issues critical to

achieving food security. That is partly because it reduces the risk of undertaking politically sensitive changes in food policy. It confirms that sound policy analysis is fundamental to successful policy reform. It illustrates how food aid can be successfully targeted not only to reach the poor but also to avoid reaching the rich. It also shows how food aid and the local currency generated from the sale of food can be used to support public sector activities needed to boost food production, improve access to social services, and reduce poverty.

Although food aid is a relatively inefficient vehicle for funding activities that require cash, this is a moot point when such aid is the only resource available. Although in theory FFW projects can achieve short-term relief and long-term development simultaneously, this rarely occurs in practice. Finally, although food aid can discourage domestic grain production, policy changes associated with food aid can enhance production—more than offsetting the minimally depressing effects of the imports.

Democratic Local Governance in Bolivia (PN-ABY-243)

With the 1994 passage of the Popular Participation Law (PPL), propitious support for which has been provided by USAID's Democratic Decentralization and Citizen Participation project, Bolivia's bold experiment in democratic local governance (DLG) is off to a good start. For the first time in its history, the country has self-governing municipalities with popularly elected mayors, councils, and vigilance committees, and rural indigenous people are participating in local politics.

This experiment raises several important issues. Because the vigilance committees and their subunits, the community organizations, have close links with their constituents, they will, like those constituents, generally lack technical skills in planning and oversight. Further, because they are elected every two years, whatever expertise does accumulate will not necessarily last very long. On the issue of inclusiveness, the PPL, by establishing so many small municipalities (311, with a median size of 8,400) and even smaller vigilance committees (representing about 3,000 people) and community organizations (representing about 450 people), ensures a political voice to any geographically concentrated group, including many formerly excluded indigenous strata and poorer urban areas.

Another issue is governance and civil society. Prior to the PPL, most local institutions were essentially governance structures, setting rules and resolving conflicts for their members, rather than civil bodies advocating for competing agendas. This means that pluralistic politics is, for the most part, absent from the local scene. Given the long-standing cultural bias for consensus over competition in matters of public governance, the development of civil society will be slow in coming; donor efforts could help accelerate it.

A final issue concerns limits and reverses to decentralization. Bureaucratic decentralization has proven more difficult in some ways than its political counterpart. For example, professionals such as teachers and physicians remain on the central government payroll even though their functions have been placed

under local control, giving them divided loyalties. There are also recognizable tendencies toward recentralization. In particular, significant power has flowed to the department level and its head—the presidentially appointed prefect—in the form of resources for training, matching grants, and payrolls. Also, the council established to coordinate governmental activity throughout the department has no power to legislate or veto. Lastly, administrative supervision for decentralization has been transferred to the Ministry of the Presidency, thus giving the president much more direct say in the process.

Bolivia's experience with DLG inculcates lessons in three areas. 1) *Success factors*. Political will has been critical. DLG initiatives work better when a pre-existing structure is incorporated into the new system. Donor efforts planned in parallel with host country reforms in DLG can facilitate timely support. Local media can effectively promote civic education in DLG. The benefits of decentralization under DLG can be equitable, though the pattern is not totally consistent. 2) *Challenges*. Increases in participation seem easier for some marginal elements than for others, especially women. A long-standing local governance structure does not necessarily imply a civil society infrastructure for DLG. Fiscal autonomy can benefit some areas much more than others. Real bureaucratic decentralization may be harder than its political equivalent. Political decentralization can spawn counteractive centralizing tendencies. 3) *Puzzles*. What effect will parallel political structures—mayors/councils, vigilance committees/community organizations, and single-member districts—have on

democratic local governance? Will political parties be constructive or destructive to DLG? How will traditional groups and institutions be incorporated into evolving DLG structures? (Author abstract, modified.)

Food Aid in the Sahel: \$1 Billion Investment Shows Mixed Results (PN-ABY-244)

This evaluation assesses the impact of some \$500 million in U.S. food aid provided over the past 38 years to the Sahelian nations of Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Chad, the Gambia, Guinea-Bissau, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, and Senegal.

Results have been mixed. Programs that sought long-term outcomes have had difficulty generating measurable results. Some, such as maternal and child health (MCH) programs, have largely failed to achieve their principal objectives (e.g., nutritional impact on young children). Others, such as school feeding programs, have generated positive and measurable results but present challenges in sustainability. Still others, such as those dealing with policy reform and food for work (FFW), have succeeded in many cases, but the full effects are difficult to measure because of problems of attribution and potentially negative side effects. Specific findings and lessons learned are noted as follows:

1) Program food aid is a double-edged sword. Recipient governments can use it to facilitate growth-inducing reforms, or they can use it to finance statist policies, support overvalued currencies, and

postpone change. In the early 1980s, USAID's efforts were often confounded by this problem, but by the mid-1980s, when conditionalities became directed at market liberalization, food markets had become more efficient. Because many of the policy reform successes in the Sahel were achieved in coordination with other donors, it is inappropriate to attribute the changes solely to USAID.

2) Monetization of program food aid has resulted in significant budget support for recipient governments. Local currency generations have been invested in a wide variety of activities. Some have yielded positive returns (such as tree planting to stabilize dunes), others, negative returns (financing state marketing agencies), and still others, ambiguous returns (strengthening an agricultural marketing board). Ambiguities have also arisen about the ownership and fungibility of counterpart funds, often resulting in disputes over how to program the money, account for it, and report on its uses.

3) Overall, FFW has a good record as a tool for targeting food to the poor during severe droughts in the Sahel. Its record as a tool for longer term development, however, is mixed and poorly documented. In some cases, FFW has served to build useful public works, but in others it has created low-quality infrastructure of limited value. In some cases, it has facilitated community development projects, but in others it has weakened the spirit of self-help necessary for genuine community initiative. To succeed, however, FFW must be well managed and used for carefully designed projects. Moreover, donors must always be vigilant for potential behavior-distorting effects of FFW and take steps to minimize them,

particularly in community development projects.

4) MCH programs, most of them managed by Catholic Relief Services, have a long but generally weak record in the Sahel. Evaluators have consistently failed to find a positive nutritional impact from these programs; this could be due either to the actual lack of nutritional impact or to methodological problems. Failure to show measurable results led to the closure of most MCH programs in the Sahel by the late 1980s. The MCH experience did show, however, that children under 2 are generally more likely to benefit nutritionally, and in a measurable way, from targeted feeding than are older children. It also showed that MCH education programs (as distinct from nutrition improvement programs) generally improved mothers' knowledge and practices about health and nutrition.

5) U.S. food aid supported only two school feeding programs in the Sahel, and information is available only on the larger one, carried out in Burkina Faso for over 30 years. Evaluators found evidence that this program had a positive impact on children's nutrition, attendance, and academic achievement. School feeding programs can have measurable, positive effects. But they can go on for perhaps too long a time if implementors neglect to develop an exit strategy or to define a finish line before starting them.

Angola's Failed Elections (PN-ABY-245)

A brief transition, incomplete demobilization, and no provision for power-sharing doomed Angola's first democratic elections, held in September 1992, and sent the country back into

civil war before the results were even tabulated.

This report begins by discussing the peace process that led to the 1992 elections. Flawed demobilization and an unfavorable social and economic climate all served to undermine the elections. The report discusses the steps taken to carry out the elections, including the role of the international community in facilitating the election process. The results of the election are covered, as well as their consequences. Lessons learned are provided.

'Partidocracia' Comes to El Salvador (PN-ABY-246)

Among the domestic causes of the Civil War of 1980-92, the most serious were a repressive political system, gross inequality in the quality of life, and the inability to manage conflict through political institutions under the rule of law. This report provides a brief summary of some of the major events that took place during the 12-year civil war. It discusses the role of the electoral process and the international community in bringing about political reform in El Salvador.

Ethiopia's Troubled Course To Democracy (PN-ABY-247)

In 1974, Ethiopia underwent a revolution, changing, in a relatively bloodless coup, from an imperial to a Marxist state. The new regime's repressive policies failed, however, bringing about its overthrow and calls for popular government. Ethiopia has found the road to democracy a rocky one, with elections in 1992 actually perpetuating a system of single-party rule.

This report covers some of the issues that have been at the root of conflict in Ethiopia in modern times; the definition of Ethiopia itself. The events leading up to the 1992 elections are discussed, as well as the country's electoral institutions and processes. The report finishes by discussing the aftermath of the 1992 election and follows with lessons learned and recommendations.

Mozambique's Vote for Democratic Governance (PN-ABY-248)

One of the world's poorest countries, Mozambique emerged in October 1992 from a 16-year civil war. The war displaced 4 million Mozambicans and caused 1.7 million more to flee to neighboring countries. War ravaged Mozambique's infrastructure and economy, leaving the country divided and in ruins. Elections in 1994, supervised by a United Nations peacekeeping operation, capped a two-year transition from war to peace. Run in close con-

junction with the international community, the elections laid the groundwork for long-term democratic development.

Nicaragua's Measured Move To Democracy (PN-ABY-249)

Economic woes, a populace weary of war, and a changing world scene helped bring free elections to Nicaragua. International aid facilitated the process.

This report covers the elections of 1990. The role of the international community in facilitating the elections is discussed, as well as the actual conduct and outcome of said elections. The consequences of the elections on the executive branch, representative bodies, electoral authorities, local authorities, judiciary, and civic organizations are discussed, as well as their effect on demobilization and resettlement, repatriation of refugees, return of internally displaced persons and ethnic, religious, and regional cleavages. Conclusions and lessons learned are provided.

FY98 Evaluations

From Bullets to Ballots: Electoral Assistance To Postconflict Societies (PN-ACA-900)

This study presents the findings, conclusions, and lessons learned of USAID-commissioned evaluations, prepared by eminent scholars, of postconflict elections held in six countries: Angola, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Mozambique, Nicaragua (see PN-ABY-245 through -249), and Cambodia (PN-ACA-903).

In all six cases, the elections, for which the international community provided major technical, logistic, and financial support (in Ethiopia, support was far less), were held under very difficult technical and political conditions. All were the result of a peace agreement after a civil war, but only in El Salvador and Mozambique was demobilization of the opposing armies—an essential condition for elections—completed. Voter registration, besides being difficult technically, was also a bone of contention, and violence and intimidation of

candidates occurred in all six countries, more so prior to the voting than on voting day itself. However, electoral fraud did not pose much of a problem, or at least it went unreported. Voter turnout was universally high, ranging from 85 percent in Nicaragua to 92 percent in El Salvador, a fact that is even more impressive given that voters often had to walk long distances and then face long delays owing to the inexperience of polling station officials.

Technically, the elections were a success, except possibly in Ethiopia, where the role of the observers was limited to confidence-building; the other five elections were accepted by the international community as reasonably “free and fair.” At the same time, the observers reported irregularities in all the elections, though their nuanced statements were often ignored by the media and even by foreign governments and international organizations. Politically, the elections in El Salvador and Nicaragua succeeded. Those in Angola and Ethiopia, by contrast, seem to have failed. The former precipitated a civil war, and in the latter the withdrawal from the elections of the major opposition parties owing to the government’s recalcitrance resulted in one-party rule. In Mozambique, the formal political outcome was positive, but the high level of international intervention raises questions about the country’s will and technical capacity for sustaining democracy. Cambodia is in a shifting and uncertain situation. In all cases, the political parties’ commitment to a democratic transition remained weak.

The elections resulted in many benefits, however. They not only educated the public in democracy, but helped establish elected governments, a reality previously unknown in these countries. In addition, the elections helped create minimal institutional structures for the functioning of pluralistic democracies, most notably political parties (some of which had been politico-military movements), NGOs that promote democracy and human rights, and free media. The elections also helped build or strengthen the institutional infrastructure for elections: new legislation, autonomous or semiautonomous national election commissions, voter registries, and technical electoral expertise.

International involvement was a critical factor in the success of the elections; without it, the elections would not have been held in Angola, Cambodia, and Mozambique. Other key factors included the presence (in the two Central American countries) or absence (in the other four) of democratic traditions, and especially of participatory social institutions; ethnic divisions, which existed in at least four countries (Ethiopia, Angola, Mozambique, and Cambodia); and the expectation that democratic stability would promote economic growth and alleviate poverty.

Postelection reconciliation has varied. El Salvador, Mozambique, and Nicaragua have made significant progress toward reconciliation. In Ethiopia, the peace pact was not respected and fighting resumed; today the country enjoys peace, but without reconciliation. In Angola, the losing party tried to

recapture power through renewed fighting, but the elected government has held its position. In Cambodia, the Khmer Rouge, which refused to participate in the elections, remains committed to a violent overthrow of the government, and the breakup of a fragile coalition and a coup resulting in a change of prime ministers has resulted in a confused situation. A lesson learned is that forging ahead with elections when the military option is still open is counterproductive. Finally, the countries differ widely in the extent to which political dialog between the opposing factions has continued after the elections. In Angola, mutual distrust has not lessened and relations have been minimal and formal. By contrast, in Nicaragua, opposition parties constantly negotiate with the ruling party to resolve conflicts.

The following are included among the lessons learned: 1) In Angola, Cambodia, and Ethiopia, unrealistic time frames for holding the elections made it impossible to complete all the preliminaries needed for the elections. 2) The high price tag for international assistance for postconflict elections suggests a need to cut costs. 3) The success of elections requires both political and technical preconditions. International assistance can help bring these about but cannot substitute for them. 4) Premature elections in post-conflict societies can be counterproductive. If the countries are highly polarized and socially fragmented, elections can lead to further polarization. (Includes recommendations and references.)

Food Aid in Honduras: Program Has Become A Model For Development (PN-ACA-901)

Over the past four decades, basic social indicators in this traditional rural society have improved dramatically. Child mortality has plummeted, food security has risen, and access to water and sanitation has progressed dramatically. Although much food aid during the 1980s was dissipated to maintain the status quo, PL 480 assistance has generally supported economic development. In sum, the USAID/Honduras program is a model for effective use of food aid and its integration with other development tools.

Assisting Legislatures In Developing Countries: A Framework For Program Planning And Implementation (PN-ACA-902)

From July 1995 to March 1996, CDIE conducted case studies on recent donor efforts to strengthen legislatures of five developing countries diverse in terms of geography and development program strategy: Bolivia, El Salvador, Nepal, Poland, and the Philippines. This report synthesizes the results of those studies and outlines a framework for future programming. Individual sections of the report examine the diverse program approaches adopted by USAID as well as the most frequent

categories of assistance, the importance of the legislature's function and political context, assistance objectives, host country partners, and lessons learned. The studies found that each of the country programs was well conceived and well implemented and helped to improve legislative performance. However, legislatures are the most political of governmental institutions, and donors' efforts can be weakened or even nullified by the electoral process, shifts in institutional leadership, and sudden social or cultural changes. Many with extensive experience in the development arena hesitate to get involved in this type of assistance, reflecting a long-standing donor aversion to entanglement in politics. For these reasons, legislative assistance may be ill suited for some USAID Missions and other donors.

The studies suggest a framework to help practitioners determine a legislature's suitability for assistance:

1) At the planning stage, seek and maintain broad-based support, remember that countries with established democratic legislature are generally more open to assistance than those in failed or pre-democratic states, and consider using pilot activities in testing a country's receptivity to assistance.

2) At the design stage, examine the legislature's needs holistically, being careful to address the role of legislators and staff, the legislature's relationship with other branches of government and with the public, and providing training in the use of computer equipment when it has been supplied. Also, emphasize enhancement of the legislature's role in

the budget process, provide training in the United States and neighboring countries with similar legislatures, and support the legislature's partners, such as advocacy and public awareness groups, since they are critical to the legislature's transparency and responsiveness.

3) In the area of management, use low-key, nonpartisan approaches to minimize risks in politically sensitive situations; distribute benefits (e.g., training, travel, and equipment) evenly among parties and factions; modify program strategy or activities based on periodic assessments of progress and risks; establish an independent internal analytical capability; and challenge existing attitudes that undermine an effective democratic legislature.

Postwar Cambodia's Struggle With Democracy (PN-ACA-903)

In May 1993, under a firm UN presence, Cambodia held the first "free and fair" elections in its history. However, Cambodia has had no experience in political toleration or compromise. Four years after the elections, the country appears to be stumbling, with no clear view to the future.

This report provides a brief history of the events leading up to the 1993 elections. It also gives an account of the United Nations electoral assistance in Cambodia and the consequences of the elections for democracy, governance, and reconciliation. Strategic and technical lessons are provided, along with recommendations.

Democratic Decentralization In Mali: A Work in Progress (PN-ACA-905)

Even before the decentralization initiatives undertaken in Mali in the aftermath of the 1991 revolution, USAID was laying the groundwork for decentralization in the country by supporting economic liberalization and localized health care programs. Since 1991, USAID has fully supported decentralization in Mali, funding the activities of mobilization groups in Kayes, Segou, and Sikasso, as well as training seminars in local finance.

Today this support continues. USAID/Mali devotes considerable resources to strengthening local institutional capacity and democratic governance through, in part, the very successful Urban Revitalization Project. This project is one of the first to use a PVO-NGO-neighborhood model, also used by the Mission in other programs such as its basic education program, which supports decentralization. In addition, the Mission has helped the Malian Ministry of Education, among the most centralized government agencies, reorganize itself toward the promotion of decentralization and local autonomy; worked to bolster civil society in villages and improved networks between villages; and, in conjunction with the U.S. Information Agency (USIA), supported civic education through media development. In fact, some of the new enterprises that grew out of the loosening of press restrictions have stayed afloat owing to USAID-USIA support. Seventy-seven private rural radio stations, the first in

West Africa, are among the most promising Mission-supported civic education innovations. But before decentralization becomes a reality, Malians will have to resolve some difficult political issues and overcome some historical and cultural factors. Chief among these is a scarcity of financial resources, bureaucratic resistance from state-appointed administrators and the Ministry of Territorial Affairs, and widespread public skepticism and mistrust of the national government—all coupled with a dependency reflex resulting from massive donor assistance during the food shortages in the 1970s and 1980s. In addition, land use issues will be difficult to resolve, as will the relationships between levels of government, traditional leaders, and elected officials.

Lessons applicable to similar programs in other democratizing countries are as follows: 1) Capitalize on government commitment; political will has been intrinsic to Mali's success in decentralization and remains the single most important factor for its continued success. 2) Support the creation of an independent decentralization office; the Malian government's Mission for Decentralization has been the driving force behind the country's decentralization program. The Mission's success underscores the importance of a strong, independent institution in charge of decentralization, under the direct supervision of the country's president or prime minister. 3) Involve people in the decentralization effort. As a result of USAID's efforts in the area of community participation, Malians everywhere are now stakeholders in decentraliza-

tion, and an unprecedented dialog between government and governed has been spurred, which may improve a long-standing antagonistic relationship. 4) Use local leaders, who are more credible on the local level, to bear the message of decentralization. At local and regional group meetings, local speakers were able to calm tempers and refocus discussions in ways that central government bureaucrats were not. 5) Use local media to promote public awareness and involvement. In Mali, where there is widespread illiteracy, private local radio stations are including traditionally excluded groups, including women, in the political arena. 6) Take advantage of the cultural context. Mali's cultural heritage offers numerous opportunities for decentralization; villages, for example, have a rich associational life and strong interpersonal networks.

Scientific Cooperation and Peace Building: A Case Study of USAID's Middle East Regional Cooperation Program (PN-ACA-907)

The Middle East Regional Cooperation Program (MERC) underwrites scientific and technical cooperative projects between Israel and its Arab neighbors. Underlying the program is the premise that the joint pursuit of science and technology will create an intellectual climate and institutional structures conducive to the peace process. MERC has supported projects in health, education, agriculture, mariculture, and the environment.

This case study discusses how the MERC program has contributed to the peace process. Limitations and factors

affecting program performance are discussed as well as policy lessons for future programs in conflict resolution. It was found that a third party with friendly relations with both countries was effective in stimulating cooperation that otherwise may not have occurred.

Democratic Local Governance in Honduras (PN-ACA-908)

Honduras has experienced significant advances in democratic local governance in the present decade. Whereas formerly, the central government controlled all aspects of local government, many municipalities are now successfully managing city services, setting their agendas, and increasing their resource bases. For the first time, citizens are able to elect their mayors directly and participate in local government by voicing their opinions and advancing proposals in open town meetings. This transformation was spurred by the 1990 Municipal Reform Law, granting autonomy to the nation's 297 municipalities, and by the related electoral reforms of 1993.

USAID/Honduras has been involved at every stage of this process of decentralization, supporting the passage and implementation of the 1990 Municipal Reform Law with the Municipal Development project (MDP); supporting FUNDEMUN and UNITEC, NGOs that have helped increase local officials' administrative capacities and ability to provide public services; and strengthening AMHON, a private association of mayors, as the single most effective organization in promoting the interests of municipalities on a national

level. However, challenges remain. These include continued bureaucratic and political resistance to decentralization, the need to integrate the principles of democratic decentralization into Honduras's political culture, and the need to increase media support for decentralization and ensure the sustainability of FUNDEMUN, UNITEC, and AMHON. Finally, progress to date has occurred in larger, more populous municipalities rather than in the more than 250 small municipalities, many of which were left untargeted by the MDP.

Three of the more significant lessons emerging from the experience of USAID/Honduras are as follows:

1) Legal frameworks and strong political leadership are essential to the success of decentralization. Honduras's success with decentralization would never have occurred without the 1990 and 1993 legislative developments and the support of Presidents Callejas and Reina. 2) With over 20 years' experience in municipal development, USAID had at its immediate disposal a cadre of trained professionals who could implement the Municipal Development project in a highly effective manner. This cadre will continue to be an important factor in the continued expansion of democratic local governance in Honduras. 3) Targeting assistance involves difficult choices. The MDP selected municipalities with the greatest potential for success, imposing rigorous compliance standards for continued assistance. While this strategy yielded some significant successes, it left unanswered the question how to make democratic local governance a reality in smaller, poorer, and more isolated municipalities.

After the War Is Over, What Comes Next? Promoting Democracy, Human Rights, And Reintegration In Postconflict Societies (PN-ACB-979)

In October 1997, USAID held an international conference in Washington on Promoting Democracy, Human Rights, and Reintegration in Postconflict Societies. In attendance were more than 300 policymakers, experts, and scholars representing bilateral and multilateral organizations, the PVO community, and academic institutions. The conference provided a forum for participants to evaluate the role of international assistance in postconflict societies and synthesize the lessons learned. Panel discussions were held on seven major themes related to the postwar political transition from authoritarian regime to fledgling democracy: refugee repatriation and resettlement; security sector reforms, with emphasis on the demobilization and reintegration of ex-combatants; postconflict elections and democratization; community-level peace building in the economic, political, and social sectors; institutionalizing human rights capacity and redressing human rights abuses through war tribunals, truth commissions, and international human rights monitoring; case studies of democracy and civil society promotion efforts; and the Development Assistance Committee report on conflict, peace, and development cooperation. This compendium includes the 14 papers presented in the conference, which are available separately (see PN-ACD-083 through PN-ACD-096), along

with the speeches by the Secretary of State and the USAID Administrator and remarks by senior USAID personnel who organized the conference.

From Bullets to Ballots: A Summary of Findings From Six Postconflict Election Studies (PN-ACD-084)

The international community has played a central role in postconflict elections. Large gaps exist in our understanding of the effectiveness of electoral assistance programs in war-torn societies, and of, above all, the impact of postconflict elections on the consolidation of peace on further democratization. In order to narrow the existing gap, reports were produced on elections in Angola, Cambodia, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Mozambique, and Nicaragua. The reports attempted to answer the following questions:

Planning and conduct of evaluations. Who took the initiative for elections? What were the objectives and expectations? How were the elections planned and conducted? What problems attended the planning and implementation processes? What were the results of the elections? How were they perceived and accepted by the contending parties?

International assistance. What was the nature of international assistance? How did the assistance affect the conduct and outcome of elections? What problems did the international community encounter in delivering its assistance?

Effects of postconflict elections on democratization and reconciliation. How did elections promote or hinder these processes? What factors and conditions affected the impact of elections on democratization and reconciliation processes?